DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 067 205 RC 006 471

AUTHOR	Cosby, Arthur G.; Picou, J. Steven
TITLE	Occupational Choice and Perceived Goal-Blockage: Residential and Racial Comparisons.
INSTITUTION	Texas A and M Univ., College Station. Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.
SPONS AGENCY	Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.
REPORT NO	USDA-CSRS-S-81
PUB DATE	Feb 72
NOTE	26p.; Paper presented at the Rural Sociology Section of the ASAW Meetings, Richmond, Virginia, February 1972
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	Aspiration; Economic Factors; Educational Background; Expectation; *Negro Youth; *Objectives; *Occupational Choice; Racial Factors; *Rural Urban Differences; *Rural Youth; Social Mobility; Socioeconomic Status

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine some factors which may have an effect on occupational choice and perceived goal-blockage of high school students in 2 selected geographical areas. The factors examined are residence, race, education, and self-concept. Group I consisted of 264 male and female black high school seniors in Louisiana. The rural subsample consisted of 157 students, 67 male and 90 female. Group II consisted of 484 high school students in 15 East Texas high schools who were interviewed in both their sophomore and senior years. The second sample was designed to insure the inclusion of male, female, black, and white students. Major findings were that lower-class southern rural and urban black youth have relatively high-status occupational desires, that significant differences existed between rural and urban females in the high aspiration and expectation categories, that the respondents tended to show agreement in their perception of blocking factors, that the proposition that urban youth will experience lower levels of perceived goal blockage than rural youth was only partially supported, that white youth will experience lower levels of perceived blockage than black youth, and that the perception of goal blockage will not increase as high school students approach the time of graduation. (PS)

ED 067205

Occupational Choice and Perceived Goal-Blockage: Residential and Racial Comparisons*

Arthur G. Cosby
Texas A&M University

J. Steven Picou
The Ohio State University

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*Paper presented at the Rural Sociology Section of the ASAW Meetings, Richmond, Virginia, February, 1972. Development of this report was sponsored by the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station as a contribution to research project H-2811. The project contributes to USDA-CSRS regional project S-81, "Development of Human Resource Potentials of Rural Youth in the South and Their Patterns of Mobility." Appreciation is expressed to the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station and Al Bertrand and Petro Hernandez for the use of the Louisiana data set. Graditude is also expressed to Taft Vivian, Maureen Isbell, and Sue Richardson for their assistance in the preparation of the manuscript.

RC006471

Occupational Choice and Perceived Goal-Blockage:
Residential and Racial Comparisons

Arthur G. Cosby J. Steven Picou

Introduction

Kuvlesky (1970) in his presentation of a theoretical perspective for analyzing the "Dynamics of Occupational and Educational Status Projections" outlines a set of basic underlying assumptions which he considers that sociologists either explicitly or implicitly make in their studies of status projection phenomena. Quoting Kuvlesky, these are:

(1) The sociologist's basic interest in status projections is in utilizing these phenomena as a means of understanding vertical social mobility. This leads to marked tendency to concentrate attention only on the rank element of social positions (statuses). Yet, it seems quite clear that people can and probably do orient themselves toward other attributes of social positions (Kuvlesky and Bealer, 1966).

(2) It is presumed that individuals consciously orient themselves toward the future and cognitively structure their future social involvements.

(3) Given the presumed future orientation, it is further assumed that people are predominantly rational in developing logical alignments among various status projections, in the modification of these in terms of perceived reality factors, and in the relationship that exist between status projections and actual attainment.

(4) It is generally assumed that status projections represent mediating variables -- they evolve out of the socialization process and provide direction for future status placement by triggering appropriate anticipatory socialization (Lane and Ellis, 1968).

(5) The formation of status projections and their change over time is viewed as an evolutionary process consisting of several differentiated stages.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate some lower order propositions which can be and have been derived from the aforementioned set of assumptions. More specifically, the paper will deal at the descriptive level with the perception of a set of reality factors (Perceived Goal-Blockage) between selected

subgroups and over time.

Some Theoretical Considerations

Typical theoretical treatments of the choice selection process frame their discussion in stages or phases of choice where the nature and quality of choices vary according to the given stage. Ginzberg (1951) formulates the fantasy stage (pre-adolescent), the tentative stage (adolescent), and the realistic stage (late adolescent and early adulthood). Generally such discussions view the actor (child) as moving from stage to stage with his occupational choices becoming more focused, the range of occupations considered narrows and his commitment to a particular occupational goal tends to increase.

At various periods in the choice process, different types of choices can be delineated. Although there is considerable lack of agreement on appropriate terminology and perhaps conceptual differences, at least two dimensions of choice can be distinguished. First, there are occupational expectations where the student's choice of a particular occupation is one he expects or anticipates entering as his life's work. (Blau, 1956; Glick, 1962; Kuvlesky and Bealer, 1966). In the pre-adolescent years, the child selects those occupations that he perceives as being pleasurable. The choices are thought to be generally variable, quite often high in status, and often unrealistic in terms of the actual occupation which the individual will enter when he becomes an adult. Furthermore, the choices at this period can be characterized as being "goal centered" with little or no concern for the means required to obtain the given occupation. (Ginzberg, 1951). During the adolescent years, the choices become more tentative and the range and type of desired and expected occupations are greatly narrowed. The individual now becomes concerned

with the means required to obtain a particular occupational goal.

As the actor introduces reality factors (in the present discussion considers the means required to obtain his occupational choice) he perceives or brings into his cognitive set obstacles or blocks which he views as limiting or obstructing his chances (opportunities) related to attainment of his choices. Furthermore, the perception of blocks should vary according to actual disparity of chances in the social situation.

During later stages of development occupational choices tend to become more realistic in terms of the individual's chances for actual attainment. The final occupational choice that a youth makes is thought to reflect a "compromise" between an individual's occupational desires and the reality factors that tend to define his actual chances for occupational attainment. (Ginzberg, 1951).

Residence and Perception of Goal Blockage

Lipset (1955) and Lipset and Bendix (1959) have pointed to the sharply differing economic and occupational structures of urban and rural settings as an explanatory device for rural - urban patterns of social mobility. The urban occupational structure can be characterized by a larger number of available jobs and as having a greater diversity in types of occupations than the rural occupation structure. The fact that urban students develop their occupational cognitive set in the urban locale with its broad occupational structure increases his chances relative to the rural youth to experience a wider range of occupational influences and consequently to acquire a wider range of both formal and informal occupational knowledge. Of special interest are the informal influences resulting from association with friends and

relatives of urban youth who work in a variety of occupations who are thus able to transmit information about both the nature and availability of a wide range of occupations. In addition to the above factors a similar argument can be set forth with respect to urban residence and the proximity of such institutions vocational technical schools, labor unions, colleges, and universities which more readily represent possible facilitation for the urban youth's realization of his occupational goals. If we can assume that perception of goal blockage varies according to the actual disparity of the residential setting, we can formulate the following propositions:

Proposition I: Urban youth will experience lower levels of perceived goal blockage than rural youth.

This is, in one very real sense, a simple minded assertion that tends to overgeneralize the effects of residence. There is some data resulting from the southern youth study S-61 that suggests that under certain conditions (broken homes) that the rural effect may be in the opposite direction.

Race and Perception of Goal Blockage

It is generally felt that no other segment of the American Youth population (with the possible exceptions of Mexican-American and American Indian youth) have the special difficulties of occupational attainment as does the black youth. The racial disparity in opportunities and subsequently attainment is typically explained in terms of a set of social, demographic, and economic factors which have been operating for years (Rose, 1957; Simpson and Yinger, 1965; and Broom and Glenn, 1965). For example, during the last two decades, the unemployment rates for young blacks have generally run about twice that of black contemporaries. Even when employed the black has been traditionally excluded from many industries and professions, and in those jobs where blacks

are employed, their work more often than not has been limited to unskilled or to those skilled occupations which are considered either inappropriate or unattractive to white workers. Furthermore, job competition between blacks and whites has to a very large degree been restricted by a "social definition" of some occupations as white work and others as black work. The rather unfortunate expression "nigger work" referring to menial, dirty unpleasant labor is indicative of the extent of the racial disparity. Without further elaboration on the race-linked disparity in occupational chances, Proposition II is derived.

Proposition II: White youth will experience lower levels of perceived blockage than Black youth.

Changes in Perceived Goal Blockage

Since earlier stages of occupational development are usually considered to be characterized by fantasy or goal centered choices and that the later adolescent stages are thought to be more realistic resulting from the introduction of reality (limiting) factors, the proposition that increase awareness of goal blockage will occur over time can be formulated. It should be noted that one may further expect an intensification of awareness of blocks at points in development such as time of high school or college graduation or time of school drop out.

Proposition III. The perception of goal blockage will increase as high school students approach the time of graduation.

Data Set I: Louisiana Data

Data Set I was obtained in the spring of 1968 from group-administered interviews with 264 male and female black high school seniors in Louisiana. The rural sub-sample consists of 157 students, 67 male and 90 female. The

rural respondents were selected from four non-metrpoplitan parishes (counties). All seniors present on the day interviews were taken were sampled. The urban sample was drawn in January of 1969 from two, large, all-black high schools located in Baton Rouge. A twenty percent random sample of senior homerooms was taken.

The vast majority of all respondents came from families of low socio-economic status reflecting a probable poverty situation. Seventy percent of all major wage-earners in the respondents families were either unemployed or held low status occupations. Furthermore, the families were characterized by high rates of broken homes.

Data Set II: East Texas Panel

Data Set II consists of interviews at two time periods with a sample of East Texas high school students. In 1966, a total of 484 group-administered interviews with high school sophomores in 15 East Texas high schools. The sample was designed to insure the inclusion of both male-female and white-black student. The panel was re-interviewed during their senior year in the spring of 1968. Group administered interviews were again used resulting in 325 interviews. In addition 71 schedules were completed by personal interviews and 37 by mail out questionnaire resulting in a total recontact sample of 433 or slightly less than 90% of the original sample. The 1968 recontact included both students and high school dropouts.

Measurement Operations: Data Set I

In the Louisiana Data Set, two open-ended questions were employed to obtain the occupational desires and plans of the respondents. The occupational desires or aspirations were determined by the responses to the following

question:

> If you were completely free to choose any job, what would you most desire as a lifetime kind of work?

Occupational plans, or expectations, were obtained from the responses to the following question:

> What kind of job do you really expect to have most of your life?

The responses to both of these questions were coded according to the Edwards' socio-economic grouping of occupations. This scheme was then collapsed into three broad levels to facilitate analysis of the data. Professional occupations were classified as "high-level" occupations. "Middle-level" occupations included owners, managers and officials, clerical and sales jobs and skilled workers. "Lower-level" occupations consisted of operatives, laborers and other unskilled occupations. The above occupational coding procedures were utilized in the classification of both the occupational desires and occupational plans of the respondents.

Perceived occupational goal-blockage was determined from a fixed-choice question which asked the respondents to indicate if the following factors would or would not affect the eventual attainment of their occupational goals: (1) not enough money to go to technical school or college; (2) the schools I have gone to; (3) no technical school or college nearby; (4) don't know enough about opportunities that exist; (5) lack of good job opportunities in or near my community; (6) my race; (7) not smart enough.

Measurement Operations: Data Set II

The decision to include the East Texas Panel in the analysis was to obtain additional information about racial and longitudinal differences in

the perception of occupational goal blockage. Perceived occupational goal blockage was determined from a slightly differing (differing somewhat from the question used in data set I) question which asked the respondents both in 1966 and again in 1968 to indicate if the following factors would or would not affect the eventual attainment of their occupational goals: (1) not wanting to move; (2) good jobs are getting scarce; (3) no technical schools or college nearby; (4) not knowing enough about opportunities; (5) my race; (6) not being smart enough; and (7) lack of good job opportunities in or near my community.

Analysis of Data Set I

Overall, the occupational aspirations of all the respondents in the Louisiana sample were found to be high. Approximately 67 percent of the urban males, 54 percent of the rural males, 74 percent of the urban females and 61 percent of the rural females expressed high level aspirations. It is also interesting to note that very few of the respondents desired low level occupations. Only in the rural male category did a substantial portion (16 percent) of the respondents indicate low level aspirations.

Table 1. The Level of Occupational Aspirations of Rural and Urban Blacks by Sex[a] (Louisiana Data Set)

	Males[b]		Females[c]	
	Urban (N=42) %	Rural (N=60) %	Urban (N=65) %	Rural (N=87) %
High Aspirations	67	54	74	61
Medium Aspirations	26	30	23	38
Low Aspirations	7	16	3	1

[a]Utilizing the two sample test of difference in proportions, statistically significant differences were found between the proportion of rural and urban high aspirants for both males and females. For a discussion of this test see Blalock, (Blalock, 1960).

[b]$Z=1.316$; $Pr\ [(p_1^* - p_2^*) \leq 0] < .05$.

[c]$Z=1.688$; $Pr\ [(p_1^* - p_2^*) \leq 0] < .05$.

Although there was a strong tendency for black youth in each of the categories to have high-level occupational goals, differences in aspiration levels were observed between the rural and urban female respondents. In the female sub-samples, a larger proportion of urban respondents had high-level aspirations, e.g., urban females .74 versus rural females .61. This difference was found to be statistically significant utilizing the two sample test of differences between proportions. The difference of proportion between urban males and rural males with high-level occupational aspirations was not found to be significant (Table 1).

The analysis of the occupational expectations of the respondents revealed that expectation levels followed a pattern similar to occupational aspirations (See Table 2). First, as found for occupational aspirations, large proportions of the students expected to enter high-level occupations. For example, slightly less than one-half (49 percent) of the urban males and 64 percent of the urban females anticipated holding jobs in the future that fell into the high-level category. Second, sharp sex differences were discernable for the respondents who planned to enter low-level occupations. Table 4 reveals that about 36 percent of the rural males and 15 percent of the urban males manifested low-level occupational plans. In contrast, only one percent of the rural females and three percent of the urban females anticipated future employment in the low-level occupational category. Third, statistically significant differences were observed between the proportions of urban and rural females that expected to enter high-level occupations. However, no similar statistically significant variation in the high-level occupational category was found for males.

Table 2. The Level of Occupational Expectations of Rural and Urban Blacks by Sex (Louisiana Data Set)

	Males[a]		Females[b]	
	Urban (N=41) %	Rural (N=50) %	Urban (N=63) %	Rural (N=79) %
High Aspirations	49	38	64	49
Medium Aspirations	36	26	33	49
Low Aspirations	15	36	3	1

[a] $Z = 1.050$; $Pr\ [(p_1^* - p_2^*) \leq 0] < .05$.

[b] $Z = 1.787$; $Pr\ [(p_1^* - p_2^*) \leq 0] < .05$.

Because of the close link between formal educational training and high level occupational attainment, information was collected concerning educational factors that the student might possibly view as limiting the attainment of his occupational goals. The data included such potential limiting facilities as: (1) the students' evaluation of the "schools they have attended"; (2) the "nearness of technical school or college" and (3) "lack of enough money to go to technical school or college."

Relatively large proportions of both males and females and rural and urban students perceived these educational limitations as lessening their occupational chances. Of the three factors, the lack of enough money was by far the most common response. For example, 82 percent of the rural males and 72 percent of the urban males thought that lack of money for educational training would have some effect in keeping them from getting the jobs they desired. Furthermore, substantial proportions of the rural and urban females perceived this factor as an important blockage for the eventual attainment of desired occupational goals. The perceived

effects of the closeness of technical schools and colleges and the perceived effects of the school attended were of considerably smaller magnitude. (See Table 3 for the percentages for the various subclasses).

Table 3. Perceived Educational Blocks to Attainment of Occupational Aspirations (Louisiana Data Set)

Perceived Blockage	Urban Males Some Effect %	Rural Males Some Effect %	Urban Females Some Effect %	Rural Females Some Effect %
"Not Enough Money to go to Technical School or College	72	82	62	73
"The Schools I Have Gone to"	44	42	39	47
"No Technical School or College Nearby"	34	44	24	36

A second set of possible perceived blocks were concerned with: (1) the student's perception of his race as a limiting factor; (2) his perception of his intelligence; (3) his perception of his knowledge about existing opportunities and (4) his perception of the lack of job opportunities in or near his community. As with the perception of the various educational blocks, relatively large proportions of the students in the various subgroups viewed these factors as having some effect in limiting their occupational chances.

A rather surprising finding was that substantial proportions of the respondents indicated that they thought their race would have "no effect" on the eventual attainment of their occupational goals. For example, the percentages ranged from 41 to 59 percent. It had been expected that the perception of race as a block would rank very high among black students as a result of the sharp racial disparity found in the deep south.

Table 4. Perception of Race, Intelligence, and Knowledge of Opportunities as as Block to Attaining Occupational Aspiration (Louisiana Data Set)

Perceived Blockage	Urban Males Some Effect %	Rural Males Some Effect %	Urban Females Some Effect %	Rural Females Some Effect %
My Race	59	44	50	41
Not Smart Enough	57	37	40	46
Don't Know Enough About the Opportunities that Exist	67	55	50	55
Lack of Good Job Opportunities in or Near my Community	65	74	71	76

The data also suggest that a fairly large proportion of the students had a negative evaluation of their ability in terms of their intelligence and in terms of their knowledge of opportunities. For example, approximately 57 percent of the urban males and 37 percent of the rural males thought that their "not being smart enough" would have some effect in keeping them from attaining their aspirations. Likewise, about 55 percent of the rural males felt that their lack of knowledge would limit attainment. Both findings suggest support of the contention that disadvantaged southern black youth tend to have negative self-concepts.

The last potential block investigated was the perception of the "lack of good jobs in or near the students' community." Again, large proportions of the students in all the subclasses said that this block would limit the attainment of their aspirations. It is interesting to note that, although the job opportunities are generally considered to be very restricted in the rural areas, there was

little difference between rural and urban blacks in the perception of this factor as a block.

Analysis of Data Set II

In the analysis of the East Texas Data Set, the perception of goal blockage was compared between racial groupings (white-blacks) over time. The analysis was made on an item-by-item bases. The degree of blockage was determined by the response of some, much, or very much to the goal blockage question.

Table 5. Change in perception of No technical school or college nearby as a factor in blocking the attainment of their occupational aspirations [East Texas Sample][a]

Degree of Effect	Proportion 1966[b] Sophomore Year	Proportion 1968[c] Senior Year	Change
Have some effect (some + much + very much)			
Blacks	.48(N=193)	.46(N=162)	-.02
Whites	.35(N=273)	.24(N=221)	-.11
Racial Difference	+.13	+.22	
Have much effect (much + very much)			
Blacks	.20(N=193)	.21(N=162)	+.01
Whites	.11(N=273)	.06(N=221)	-.05
	+.09	+.15	
Have very much effect (very much)			
Blacks	.12(N=193)	.10(N=162)	-.02
Whites	.07(N=273)	.01(N=221)	-.06
	+.05	+.09	

[a] Total N = 484

[b] No information = 8

[c] No information = 93

The first item considered was the perception of no technical school or college nearby as a factor in the blocking the attainment of occupational goals. There was an apparent overall tendency for black youth both in their sophomore year (1966) and senior year (1968) to be more likely to perceive this factor as a black than among the white youth. For example, 48 percent of the black youth as compared to 35 percent of the whites viewed this factor as having some effect in 1966. By 1968, the magnitude of the racial difference had increased to 46 percent for the blacks and only 24 percent for the white subgroup. There was also a discernable difference in the magnitude of the racial difference as the degree of the effect (some, much, or very much) increased (see Table 5). The magnitude of the racial difference appeared to decrease with increases in the degree of effect.

The change over time (1966 to 1968) in the perception of this blockage factor did not support the proposition of increased awareness over time. In fact there was a tendency especially among the whites for a decrease in perception rates.

The perception of good jobs getting scarce as a blockage factor revealed slightly different racial trends (Table 6). In 1966, only slight racial variation were observed, i.e., 47 percent for blacks and 49 percent for whites as having some effect. Similar percentages were observed with increased degree of effect. However, somewhat larger racial differences were observed by the senior year. No noticeable increase in the racial difference with change in the degree of effect was found.

Table 6. Change in the Perception of GOOD JOBS GETTING SCARCE as a factor in blocking the attainment of their occupational aspirations [East Texas Sample][a]

Degree or Effect	Proportions 1966[b] Sophomore Year	1968[c] Senior Year	Change
Have some effect (some + much + very much			
Blacks	.47(N=191)	.48(N=163)	+.01
Whites	.49(N=273)	.38(N=222)	-.11
Racial Difference	-.02	+.10	
Have much effect (much + very much)			
Blacks	.19(N=191)	.15(N=163)	-.04
Whites	.18(N=273)	.10(N=222)	-.08
Racial Difference	+.01	+.05	
Have very much effect (very much)			
Blacks	.10(N=191)	.08(N=163)	-.02
Whites	.07(N=273)	.02(N=222)	-.05
Racial Difference	+.03	+.06	

[a] Total N = 484

[b] No information = 11

[c] No information = 91

As was the case with the perception of the first block factor (no technical schools or college nearby), no increases in perception of good jobs are getting hard to find was observed between the sophomore and senior years.

The third factor to be considered, perception of lack of good job opportunities in or near my community, as a goal blockage factor revealed few noticeable differences between racial groups. The largest racial differences here were only 6 percent. Also no clear relationship between degree of effect and magnitude of racial difference was found.

There was, however, a slight tendency for the percentage of students perceiving this factor as a block to increase over time; e.g., 68 percent of the students when they were sophomores and 76 percent of the students when they were seniors perceived this factor as a goal block. It should also be pointed out that of the seven factors considered as blocks in this study, lack of good jobs in or near my community as having a higher degree effect than any of the other blocks.

Table 7. Change in perception of the Lack of Good Job Opportunities in or near my community as a factor in blocking the attainment of their occupational aspirations [East Texas Sample][a]

Degree of Effect	Proportion 1966[b] Sophomore Year	1968[c] Senior Year	Change
Have some effect (some + much + very much)			
Blacks	.68(N=193)	.76(N=160)	+.08
Whites	.66(N=274)	.70(N=222)	+.04
Racial Difference	+.02	+.06	
Have much effect (much + very much)			
Blacks	.34(N=193)	.36(N=160)	+.02
Whites	.29(N=274)	.39(N=222)	+.10
Racial Difference	+.05	-.03	
Have very much effect (very much)			
Blacks	.19(N=193)	.21(N=160)	+.02
Whites	.13(N=274)	.18(N=222)	+.05
Racial Difference	+.06	+.03	

[a] Total N = 484

[b] No information = 7

[c] No information = 93

The fourth factor considered was Not Knowing enough About Opportunities. In each racial comparison, a higher percentage of black students than white students indicated that this factor had some effect. However, the magnitude of the differences were small ranging from only 9 to 3 percent. No trends were noted with respect to magnitude of racial differences and increase in degree of effect. Also, the changes from the sophomore to senior year were all slight ranging from 1 to 6 percent.

Table 8. Change in perception of Not knowing enough about opportunities in blocking the attainment of their occupational aspirations [East Texas Sample][a]

Degree of Effect	Proportion 1966[b] Sophomore Year	1968[c] Senior Year	Change
Have some effect (some + much + very much)			
Blacks	.60(N=193)	.59(N=162)	-.01
Whites	.54(N=274)	.56(N=220)	-.02
Racial Differences	-.06	+.03	
Have much effect (much + very much)			
Blacks	.20(N=193)	.17(N=162)	-.03
Whites	.14(N=274)	.08(N=220)	-.06
Racial Difference	+.06	+.09	
Have very much effect (very much)			
Blacks	.11(N=193)	.06(N=162)	-.05
Whites	.07(N=274)	.03(N=220)	-.04
Racial Difference	+.04	+.03	

[a] Total N = 484

[b] No information = 7

[c] No information = 94

The blockage factor not wanting to move was considered next. The expected racial differences were observed in both the sophomore and senior interviews: 35 percent of the black sophomores perceived some effect as compared to 28 percent of the whites, and in the senior interview 37 percent of the blacks as compared to 23 percent of the whites perceived some effect. No consistent trend was observed as the degree of effect increased.

The changes in the perception of blocks between the sophomore and senior year were generally small. Furthermore, the tendency was for a slight decrease in perception in the senior year.

Table 9. Change in the perception of not wanting to move as a factor in blocking the attainment of their occupational aspirations [East Texas Sample][a]

	Proportions		
Degree of Effect	1966[b] Sophomore Year	1968[c] Senior Year	Change
Have some effect (some + much + very much)			
Blacks	.35(N=191)	.37(N=163)	+.02
Whites	.28(N=273)	.23(N=222)	-.05
Racial Difference	+.07	+.14	
Have much effect (much + very much)			
Blacks	.17(N=191)	.13(N=163)	-.04
Whites	.12(N=273)	.05(N=222)	-.07
Racial Difference	+.05	+.08	
Have very much effect (very much)			
Blacks	.10(N=191)	.07(N=163)	-.03
Whites	.05(N=273)	.02(N=222)	-.03
Racial Difference	+.05	+.05	

[a] Total N = 484

[b] No information = 10

[c] No information = 91

Race as a perceived blockage factor was considered next. As would be expected much larger propositions of the black youth both in the 1966 and 1968 recontacts perceived their race as a blockage factor. Approximately 43 percent of blacks and 9 percent of the whites so indicated in the sophomore contact. Similar percentage were absent in the 1968 recontact. As was the case with the Louisiana data set, the proportion of blacks who considered race as a block was less than expected.

The magnitude of the racial difference also tended to decrease with increases in the degree of effect. Differences of +.34 percent and +.39 percent were observed between racial grouping in both contact (race having some effect). However, comparable differences of +.12 percent and +.11 percent were found for race having very much effect. There was also a slight downward trend in the percentages overtime.

Table 10. Change in the perception of Race as a factor in blocking the attainment of their occupational aspirations [East Texas Sample][a]

Degree of Effect	Proportions 1966[b] Sophomore Year	1968[c] Senior Year	Change
Have some effect (some + much + very much)			
Blacks	.43(N=191)	.42(N=163)	-.01
Whites	.09(N=271)	.03(N=222)	-.06
Racial Difference	+.34	+.39	
Have much effect (much + very much)			
Blacks	.18(N=191)	.17(N=163)	-.01
Whites	.05(N=271)	.01(N=222)	-.04
Racial Difference	+.13	+.16	
Have very much effect (very much)			
Blacks	.14(N=191)	.12(N=163)	-.02
Whites	.02(N=271)	.01(N=222)	-.01
Racial Difference	+.12	+.11	

[a] Total N = 484

[b] No information = 11

[c] No information = 91

The last goal blockage factor considered was Not being smart enough. Although there was a tendency for higher percentages of black students in each comparison. to perceive of this factor as a block, the magnitude of the differences were small (only in one comparison was there a 10 percent difference). No clear trends were observed between the racial differences and degree of effect. Also, there was a slight decrease in perception of factor over time.

Table 11. Change in perception of Not being smart enough in blocking the attainment of their occupational aspirations [East Texas Sample][a]

Degree of Effect	Proportion 1966[b] Sophomore Year	1968[c] Senior Year	Change
Have some effect (some + much + very much)			
Blacks	.46(N=196)	.46(N=161)	0
Whites	.45(N=274)	.42(N=222)	-.03
Racial Difference	+.01	+.04	
Have much effect (much + very much)			
Blacks	.21(N=196)	.12(N=161)	-.09
Whites	.11(N=274)	.07(N=222)	-.04
Racial Difference	+.10	+.05	
Have very much effect (very much)			
Blacks	.11(N=196)	.07(N=161)	-.04
Whites	.07(N=274)	.02(N=222)	-.05
Racial Difference	+.04	+.05	

[a] Total N = 484

[b] No information = 4

[c] No information = 92

Discussion

Analysis of the Louisiana data revealed that lower-class southern rural and urban black youth have relatively high-status occupational desires and plans for the future. These occupational choices appear "unrealistic" in terms of: (1) the past attainment of youth with similar disadvantaged backgrounds; (2) the present opportunities available to the majority of southern blacks; and (3) the actual occupations these youth will probably enter.

In addition, it was found that significant differences existed between rural and urban females in the high aspiration and expectation categories. For both occupational aspirations and expectations proportionately more urban females were found in the high occupational category than their rural counterparts. This finding tends to support Seymour M. Lipset's (1955) contention that rural youth have lower occupational aspirations than urban youth only for black females. This finding contradicts the findings of an earlier study by Middleton and Grigg (1959). Also the lack of a statistically significant difference between the rural and urban males differs from the relationship reported by Kuvlesky and Ohlendorf (1968). A word of caution should be interjected concerning the statistical tests applied in this study. The tests of differences between proportions was based on very small subsample thus requiring fairly large differences before statistically significance relationships could occur, e.g., the male difference was .13 yet not statistically significant. The rationale for reporting these findings is to demonstrate the similarity or lack of similarities between this data set and data sets reported in previous studies.

The respondents tended to show an overall agreement in their perception of factors that would tend to block the eventual attainment of their

occupational goals. Large proportions of all respondents perceived lack of financial resources for continuing their education beyond high-school as an important occupational goal-blockage factor. This finding provides further support for the contention that the occupational goals of the respondents are unrealistic because one of the most salient prerequisites for placement in the majority of high-status, professional occupations is graduate-level college training. Ostensibly, lack of money to attend college is a very realistic deterrent to the occupational goals of disadvantaged youth. Both rural and urban respondents were cognizant of the fact that the attainment of their occupational aspirations would be hampered by lack of job opportunities in their communities.

Proposition I: Urban youth will experience lower levels of perceived goal blockage than rural youth.

The data suggest that this proposition was only partially supported. Rural youth both male and female were more likely than urban youth to perceive educational linked blocks as effecting the attainment of their occupational goals. This generalization held for the factors: (1) "not enough money to go to technical school or college," (2) "the schools I have gone to," and (3) "no technical school or college nearby." Similarly, rural youth were more likely (however, the magnitude of the difference was less) to perceive of the "lack of good job opportunities in or near my community." The one exception was with the males perception of the schools I have gone to." On the other hand, the urban male students were more likely to perceive "self concept" linked factors as blocking their occupational attainment, i.e., higher percentages of urban males perceived (1) "my race," (2) "not

smart enough" and (3) "don't know enough about the opportunities that exist." The female differences were mixed. The first generalization closely approximates a social psychological version of the Lipset hypothesis, i.e., rural youth are more likely to perceive community factors (educational and occupational) as blocking the attainment of their goals. Urban youth, or at least, urban males tended to look inward (to their race, their knowledge, and their intelligence) in the perception of blocks. The above set of generalization were empirically derived and are set forth not as finding but rather are suggestive of possible hypotheses for future research.

Proposition II: White youth will experience lower levels of perceived blockage than Black youth.

The item by item analysis of racial differences observed in the East Texas Data can be summarized as follows. When racial comparisons were made over time and with respect to degree of effect, forty-two comparisons resulted (these were not all independent comparisons, however). In forty of the forty-two comparisons, higher proportions of black students than white students perceived the factor as having effect. This information was indicated in the various tables by the sign of racial difference. When a different evaluating technique was used more mixed results occured. This second evaluating technique utilized both the sign and informal measure of the magnitude of the racial difference. A difference of .08 was somewhat arbitrarily selected (the rationale for using .08 was that such a magnitude would have yielded statistical significance had tests been appropriate). Using this method racial difference occured in only sixteen of the forty-two comparisons. The majority of the difference were observed in response to two factors: race and no technical schools or college nearby.

Proposition III. The perception of goal blockage will increase as high school students approach the time of graduation.

Of the forty-two comparison over time of the perception of blacks, increases in perception were observed in only nine comparison. The overall tendency was for perception to slightly decrease - a finding contradictory to the above proposition. When the .08 measure was applied increase were observed in only two comparisons and decreases in only four comparisons suggesting little change had occured.

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